

MAP of the CARIBBEAN



Many of the customs of the Caribbean people are linked with Africa, because of our African ancestors. **Culture** (the way people live their lives) in The Bahamas and the Caribbean has also been influenced by the Europeans, especially the **British**, who set up settlements or **colonies** on many islands. For example, many Caribbean countries, including The Bahamas, have **systems of government** that are based on the British parliamentary system. There are many other signs of the European influence in the Caribbean:

Architecture – there are many buildings around the Caribbean built in British, Dutch, French and Spanish styles. □

Police forces – several Caribbean police forces wear uniforms of similar design.

Education system – the way young people are educated in different Caribbean countries is similar to European systems of education.

Names – there are many people, streets and buildings throughout the Caribbean that have names of European origin. Can you think of any other ways in which The Bahamas has been influenced by the European way of life?

Many of the **festivals** celebrated today in the Caribbean were started by slaves. Although many such festivals are similar, each island celebrates in its own special way. The Bahamas and many other Caribbean countries celebrate similar special days.

In The Bahamas we celebrate Discovery Day on 12th October, which is the date when Christopher Columbus first landed here. In 2013, Discovery Day was replaced by **National Heroes Day** to celebrate our Nation Builders.

On **Emancipation Day** people in different islands remember when slavery came to an end. Each country also has its own Independence Day, when the people celebrate the day when their country first began to govern itself.

Another link between the islands of the Caribbean is **Carifesta**. This is an event that brings together the cultures of each Caribbean country in one place. Those who attend can experience the food, crafts, music and culture of Caribbean countries.

Carifesta stands for **Caribbean Festival of Creative Arts**. The festival began in 1972 as a vehicle for developing greater appreciation and knowledge of the culture of the Caribbean region. At the beginning, only **CARICOM** members participated but later the festival opened to all countries of the region. It provided a forum for all art forms and is held in a different country each year.

Carifta stands for Caribbean Free Trade Association. This was formed in 1965 to promote trade among Caribbean countries. It started with two member countries trading among themselves. Goods entering one member country from another would be duty-free. In 1974 the members were ready to make a bold step toward the creation of a common market. The treaty of Chaguaramas established **Caricom**.

The **Caribbean Development Bank** was set up as a regional bank to provide loans to Caribbean countries for special development projects. The Bahamas is a member of this bank, and contributes money to it. To qualify for a loan, a project must be designed to improve the way of life of the local people.

Caribbean people are known for their love of exotic food. It is possible to find a favorite dish almost anywhere on our islands. The Bahamas Stewed fish, Boiled fish and Johnny Cake, Crab and dough, Pea soup and dough. Barbados Flying fish an' coo coo. Jamaica Ackee and salt fish, Jerk pork, Curry goat. Dominica Pilau.

QUESTIONS:

1. Define the following terms:

colony - _____

culture - _____

2. What is the name of the European country that has had the greatest influence on how we live our lives?
3. Name **THREE** areas of Bahamian life that shows the country named in question 2's influence.
4. What is the name of the holiday that replaced **Discovery Day** in The Bahamas and what is its significance?
5. "**Carifesta is an event that brings together the cultures of each Caribbean country in one place to experience the food, crafts, music and culture of Caribbean countries.**"

What does **Carifesta** stand for?

6. What does **Carifta** stand for?

b. In what year was it formed?

c. What does it promote?

7. This bank was set up as a regional bank to provide loans to Caribbean countries for special development projects.

What is the name of that bank?